

# Border Eagle

Vol. 53, No. 28

Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas

July 15, 2005

## Air Force promotes four XLers to captain

Compiled from staff reports

During an Air Force promotion release Monday, four lieutenants here were selected for promotion to captain.

They are:

n Jody Cowan and John Weaver, 47th Medical Support Squadron

n Lance Smith, 47th Flying Training Wing

n Daniel Walters, 86th Flying Training Squadron

The CY05A Quarterly Captain Selection Process selected 563 lieutenants for promotion to captain. The Air Force Personnel Center's homepage at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/offprom/> contains the entire list. The captain's process considered 570 officers.

The results are as follows:

Selection statistics in-the-promotion zone:

Line - 426 selected from 429 considered for a 99.3-percent selection rate.  
Chaplain - 2 selected from 2 considered



Photo by Maj. Rex Calvert

### Flashback from the Rodeo...

(Inside the T-1) Capt. Joe Anderson and 1st Lt. Kate Black of the 86th Flying Training Squadron return from weather-ship duty during Air Force Rodeo 2005 at McChord Air Force Base, Wash. Mount Rainier rises in the background. See story of nine XLers who made up the first Laughlin specialized undergraduate instructor pilot team to attend an Air Force Rodeo competition on page 4.

for a 100-percent selection rate.  
Judge Advocate - 38 selected from 38 considered for a 100-percent selection rate.

Nurse Corps - 43 selected from 43 considered for a 100-percent selection rate.  
Medical Science Corps - 21 selected from 21 considered for a 100-percent

select rate.

Biomedical Science Corps - 28 selected from 28 considered for a 100-percent selection rate.

Selection statistics above-the-promotion zone:

Line - 5 selected from 9 considered for a 55.6-percent selection rate

## New housing allowance guidelines doesn't mean pay cut

By Sgt. Sara Wood

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Defense officials are eliminating the “geographic rate protection” clause that ensures servicemembers moving to a new area receive the same housing allowance as those already living there.

Geographic rate protection is expiring in January because Basic Allowance for Housing rates have reached a level where servicemembers no longer have to pay out-

of-pocket expenses for housing, said Air Force Col. Virginia Penrod, DoD director of military compensation.

Any rate cut from year to year will not negatively affect servicemembers who are remaining in the area where they already receive BAH, she noted.

Penrod stressed that the BAH rate is set at the average housing cost for the area. Rates are further set based on military rank, with each pay-grade level having a set acceptable standard of housing. Servicemembers may still have to

pay some out-of-pocket expenses if they choose to live above that level. Conversely, if servicemembers choose to live below the average level, they will still receive the same BAH rate.

Troops still have “individual rate protection” as long as they stay within the same geographic area. If average housing costs in a given geographic area go down, troops already living in that area continue to receive

See ‘Allowance,’ page 7

### Newslines

#### Quarterly awards lunch

The 47th Flying Training Wing 2nd Quarter Awards Lunch is scheduled for 11:30 a.m. July 27 at Club XL.

All nominees should R.S.V.P. with Senior Master Sgt. Elijah Hussey at 298-5703.

Commanders and distinguished visitors should R.S.V.P. with wing protocol at 298-4708.

All others wishing to attend should contact their unit point of contact to sign up.

For more information, call 298-5703 or 298-4635.

#### Pride store restocked

The pride store in building 117 has restocked in order to offer base members valuable items and service.

Some of the items available include lawn sprinklers, water hoses, fertilizer and an assortment of household repair items.

For more information, call 298-4356.

### Deployment stats

Deployed:	61
Returning in 30 days:	1
Deploying in 30 days:	0

### Mission status

Mission capable rate  
(As of Tuesday)

T-1, 83.1%	T-38A, 71.9%
T-6, 89.0%	T-38C, 81.7%

### Alcohol-related incidents

January to July 2004 8

Jan. 1 to July 13, 2005 15

Days since last incident 12

# Families are 'active duty' too

## *Honoring family members enhances readiness*



### Commander's Corner

By Lt. Col. James Wingo  
47th Flying Training Wing  
plans and programs chief

After enjoying a stack of hot pancakes with my family, I presented my military identification card to the cashier for the "military discount."

He nodded and said, "The discount is for you alone, sir," and politely explained that he'd be happy to separate my family's check, re-run the ticket, and discount only my meal.

"Are you **OK** with that, sir?" he asked. Without thinking, I blurted, "No, I'm not **OK** with that. I drag these people all over the world... they are serving their country right along with me." Of course, the cashier was simply relating a policy change, perhaps brought on by a downturn in sales.

My initial reaction to the cashier revealed my strongly held belief that our families are serving on 'active duty,' too. They do, in a sense, offer their lives in service every day. They move with us continually, giving up a more 'stable' life others may enjoy. They are asked to make new friends every two or three years, giving up friendships just as they are growing strong. They share our lean paychecks, at times even requiring spouses to shop using food stamps to feed their families. They don't have representation at AFPC to voice their assignment preferences, taking the better with the worse without re-

course. We ask them to carry ID cards, live in cramped quarters, and endure endless absences and nearly constant uncertainty. While we put on a brave face and call our lifestyle adventurous and exciting and worldly, the fact remains our families lay aside many of their hopes and dreams to follow us all over the world.

How, then, can we salute our 'active-duty' spouses and children? How can we honor their 'military' service? I offer three of the countless ways we can return their commitment to us, and 'XL' as an expeditionary team.

#### **First, we can eXecute our Leave regularly.**

We military are conservative as a culture and tend to store up leave for use when needed. However, we can take advantage of the flexibility of our mission and plan leave time throughout the year. Your family can look forward to spending quality time with you 'all to themselves,' and you will return to duty refreshed. Also, from a supervisor's perspective, having to accommodate members with use or lose leave can place hardship on your unit and may deny others the opportunity to take leave.

#### **Second, we can eXpand our Leisure time.**

Gen. Looney's recent challenge to us should be our guide -- 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and no weekends. Flying training sorties from sunup to sundown doesn't excuse us from honoring the spirit of the commander's intent. Point is, we can maximize our productivity during office hours. Go home at quitting time and be with your family. Achieving a balance between duty and family, while challenging, will serve us well and make us

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**"Caring for our families well significantly enhances our military readiness and honors their service. Our spouses and children give their 'lives' for us, and we owe them nothing less than our unwavering loyalty, our quality time, and our deepest gratitude."**

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better Airmen, better spouses and better parents.

#### **Third, we should always eXpect to Leave.**

Expeditionary military life is all about training, temporary duty, deployment and frequent separation.

Budgeting our income, using joint accounts, and keeping our spouses "read in" to our finances is essential to reducing stress at home and preparing our family for our inevitable absence.

None of us is exempt from death, either. Recent tragic fatalities here in AETC have driven home the requirement to be "ready to go" at any time. That means keeping vRED, SGLI beneficiaries, and our wills current. It means keeping insurance premiums paid and being prepared spiritually as well.

Caring for our families well significantly enhances our military readiness and honors their service. Our spouses and children give their 'lives' for us, and we owe them nothing less than our unwavering loyalty, our quality time and our deepest gratitude.

They may not always earn the military discount, but we should never discount their very real sacrifice in service to this great country.

## Border Eagle

### Editorial Staff

Col. Tod Wolters

Commander

Capt. Ken Hall

Public affairs chief

1st Lt. Sheila Johnston

Internal information chief

Master Sgt. Anthony Hill

PA NCO in charge

Airman 1st Class

Olufemi Owolabi

Editor

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### Deadlines

News for the Border Eagle should be submitted to the 47th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 338, Laughlin AFB, TX, 298-5262. **Copy deadline is close of business each Thursday the week prior to publication.**

Submissions can be e-mailed to: [olufemi.owolabi@laughlin.af.mil](mailto:olufemi.owolabi@laughlin.af.mil) or [sheila.johnston@laughlin.af.mil](mailto:sheila.johnston@laughlin.af.mil).

### Advertising

Advertising should be submitted to the Del Rio News-Herald, 2205 Bedell, Del Rio, TX, 774-4611. Advertising should be submitted by 4 p.m. each Friday.



**Actionline**

**Col. Tod Wolters**  
47th Flying Training  
Wing commander



**Call 298-5351 or email  
actionline@laughlin.af.mil**

One way to work through problems that haven't been solved through normal channels is the Commander's Actionline.

Before you call in or e-mail an Actionline, please try to work out the problem through the normal chain of command or directly with the base agency involved.

When calling or e-mailing the Actionline, please keep messages brief and remember to include your name and phone number so you are assured of a timely personal reply. Contact information is also useful when additional information is needed to pursue your inquiry.

We will make every attempt to ensure confidentiality when appropriate.

If your question relates to the general interest of the people of Laughlin, the question and answer may also be printed in the Border Eagle.

Thanks for your cooperation, and I look forward to reading some quality ideas and suggestions.

Below are some useful telephone numbers that may be helpful when working your issue with a base agency.

<b>AAFES</b>	298-3176
<b>Chapel</b>	298-5111
<b>Civil Engineer</b>	298-5252
<b>Civilian Personnel</b>	298-5299
<b>Clinic</b>	298-6311
<b>Commissary</b>	298-5815
<b>Contracting</b>	298-5439
<b>Dormitory manager</b>	298-5213
<b>EEO</b>	298-5879
<b>Finance</b>	298-5204
<b>FWA hotline</b>	298-4170
<b>Housing</b>	298-5904
<b>Information line</b>	298-5201
<b>Inspector General</b>	298-5638
<b>Legal</b>	298-5172
<b>MEO</b>	298-5400
<b>Military Personnel</b>	298-5073
<b>Public Affairs</b>	298-5988
<b>Security Forces</b>	298-5900
<b>Services</b>	298-5810

***"Through trust and teamwork, train expeditionary airpower experts to fight and win America's wars."***

— 47th Flying  
Training Wing  
mission statement

## A sobering thought: The 'I' in DUI

**By Lt. Col. Matthew Flood**  
435th Munitions Squadron

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany -- You have all seen the commercials that warn about the dangers of drunk driving. You also have probably heard numerous testimonials from servicemembers who drove their vehicles after drinking too much only to meet some tragic end. You may have even taken the time to read an article such as this that warns of the dangers of drunk driving. But do these messages affect the behavior of the intended audience?

The Air Force has expended tremendous resources devising "user friendly" and "foolproof" plans to help Airmen make the right decision when it comes to drinking and driving. We have Combat Wingman, Airmen Against Drunk Driving and free non-alcoholic drinks for designated drivers just to mention a few. Unfortunately, in spite of all the programs and services available, there is still a small percentage of people who will drink and drive. So when it came time for

me to develop a DUI briefing, I struggled with what I could possibly say to convince people not to become a statistic.

I initially tried an appeal to an Airman's conscience. I pointed out the increased burden being placed on his co-workers to pick up his slack while he attends the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment program and legal office appointments. Because the Airman will no longer have a driver's license, he may not be able to do his primary job requiring an increased workload on his peers. He won't be able to get to work without assistance, so again co-workers will have to shoulder the burden. Finally, there is the loss of a goal day for the entire squadron. A day that should be spent with family and friends, or just relaxing from the high operational tempo, will now be spent working.

I felt it would be patently obvious to everyone that a foolish and selfish decision that resulted in a DUI affects many more people than just the guilty party.

So I set out to re-attack the problem. My first sergeant came

up with some figures on what a DUI actually costs an Airman.

The most common punishment for a DUI here is an Article 15, loss of a stripe, some additional duty and possibly a monetary garnishment. As painful as that sounds, it is only the tip of the iceberg.

Because of the loss of rank, the member will receive less base pay, less cost-of-living allowance and won't get promoted to staff sergeant with his peers. During that promotion delay, the Airman will lose more than \$10,000 in direct compensation. These costs don't even take into account the incessant taxi fares required to get anywhere. When the Airman is able to drive again, auto insurance will cost, on average, an additional \$4,000 per year.

Worse yet, since lost time cannot be made up, the effects of reduced earnings will escalate with time and be felt for an entire career. The monetary cost of a DUI for military personnel is sobering, or at least it should be.

From a purely selfish viewpoint, drinking and driving doesn't make much sense.

## American dream, opportunity alive, well

**By Staff Sgt. Cat Caisne**  
355th Wing Public Affairs

I was raised on the concept that in America hard work and sheer determination can lead to a better life than you ever thought possible for your family.

As I helped my grandmother cook, or as my grandfather walked me to school, I was reminded of the opportunities and blessings America has bestowed on my family.

My grandparents were born in Malta, a tiny island in the Mediterranean south of Sicily, Italy. My grandfather's family ran a successful hotel business, and my grandfather had the benefit of privileged childhood. My grandmother's family, in comparison, was much more humble. She was one of 11 children, and

her father was a nurse.

When my grandmother was in fifth grade and my grandfather in sixth, their childhoods were shattered. Malta, at the time an English commonwealth, entered World War II. Because of its strategic naval location, Malta would become the most heavily bombed nation (per square mile) of the war.

My grandmother was pulled from school and my grandfather from his tutors to run to the shelters for cover during countless air raids. Soon, all school lessons stopped, and staying alive became the name of the game. Once, my grandmother was in church during an air raid. A bomb broke through the dome of the church. Luckily, it did not go off.

Food was scarce. My grandmother's father would sneak

food from the hospital to feed his children. Most of the time, he could only manage enough for one, which they would all split. My grandparents didn't see the American Dream as fame or fortune.

To them, the American Dream was opportunity -- opportunities for all 22 of their grandchildren to go to college.

I am fortunate I serve and live in a country where people immigrate every day seeking the American Dream. They know only America can provide them with the life they want.

The American Dream is alive and well. It is the reason I only want to live in America where my version stands a chance of coming true, thanks to the stepping stone my grandparents laid for me.

## XLers: First Laughlin team attends airlift Rodeo

### XLers return, bring back experience to improve pilot training from Rodeo 2005

By Airman 1st Class  
Owolabi Olufemi  
Editor

Nine XLers made up the first Laughlin specialized undergraduate instructor pilot team to ever attend an Air Force Rodeo competition.

Seven IPs, two civilian maintainers and two T-1A Jayhawk aircraft from here recently participated in Rodeo 2005 at McChord Air Force Base, Wash.

The team from Laughlin, consisting of Maj. Rex Calvert, Capt. Joe Anderson, James Bucks, and Joe McCane, 1st Lts. Kate Black and Drew Patrick, 86th Flying Training Squadron, Marc Martinez and Rod Rangel, 47th Maintenance Directorate, was led by Lt. Col. Frank Van Horn, 86th FTS commander.

After returning here, the team briefed their counterparts on what they learned at the rodeo.

Rodeo 2005, a weeklong Air Mobility Command international competition that focuses on improving the skills of air mobility professionals, ended June 24. The competition included airdrop, air refueling, aero-

medical evacuation, security forces procedures, short-field landings and related ground operations.

According to Colonel Van Horn, the team leader, "We train the future Air Mobility Command pilots. The rodeo offers us a chance to showcase our abilities and see how we fair against the people we train."

The rodeo added a new category this year called Operation Support Airlift and Special Air Mission (an event designed for invited distinguished visitors), said Major Calvert, the team captain. "This is the category Laughlin was invited to participate in."

During the Rodeo, Laughlin provided support for the competition by flying weather-ship duties. They scouted flying routes the other aircraft flew and evaluated the weather, birds and other significant events. They reported all information to the command post which passed on the information to the crews, said Lieutenant Black, first assignment instructor pilot.

They also competed with other DV's in precision blocking time and touchdown, and a fit-to-fight compe-



Air Force Photo

**Capt. Brian Collins knocks out 75 push-ups during the fit-to-fight portion of Rodeo 2005. During the event, three members from each team accomplished push-ups, sit-ups and the 1.5-mile run as they do on the annual Air Force fitness test. Captain Collins is assigned to the 62nd Operations Support Squadron, McChord Air Force Base, Wash. The Laughlin rode team participated in the fitness test competition, and Maj. Rex Calvert, 86th Flying Training Squadron instructor pilot and team captain, scored 100 points. The team, consisting of seven instructor pilots and two civilian maintainers, is the first from Laughlin to attend an airlift rodeo.**

tion, among other events.

"The rodeo really helped our first assignment instructor pilots (FAIPS) a lot," said Major Calvert.

Furthermore, one of the FAIPS, Lieutenant Patrick said, "It was a unique opportunity for me to do a mission that I personally have never come across or close to. Just performing a task we haven't done before adds to our experience a lot. We learned quite a bit about interacting as a crew, operating under stress and timing control."

In addition, Captain McCane said attending the rodeo let him see how other cultures and missions work. "Because the competition was based on real-world operations, I had the opportunity to see the entire AMC world and its different mission."

Apart from participating in rodeo competitions, some of the pilots flew with other countries' crewmembers. "People got to do a lot of different things," said Major Calvert.

According to the pilots, the level of competition was highly challenging, and the team had a tough sched-

ule meeting Laughlin's mission requirements, which cut into their rodeo training time.

Captain McCane said, "There was a lot of good cockpit resource management and teamwork in practice during that week, and I think that's the biggest thing I learned."

"I don't think I have (ever) experienced the level of concentration and teamwork we exhibited during the event," Lieutenant Patrick explained. "I think we also learned the amount of time one has to train can be an indicator of how well one will score during a competition."

Major Calvert said, "Integrating locally competitive events similar to the rodeo's would make a squadron cross-country deployment more enjoyable and educational."

According to Colonel Van Horn, his team being the first SUPT team to attend the rodeo brought versatility and uniqueness to the competition.

"Being at the rodeo is a great professional development and addition to the competition," the colonel said.



**(Left to right) 1st Lt. Andrew Patrick, Capts. Joe Anderson and James Bucks, 86th Flying Training Squadron, pose for a photo with a Laughlin T-1A Jayhawk during Rodeo 2005 at McChord Air Force Base, Wash. They are three of nine XLers who made up the first Laughlin specialized undergraduate instructor pilot team to attend an Air Force rodeo competition.**



Airman fights his way back to Iraq after serious injury



Photo by Senior Airman Tim Beckham

Senior Airman Douglas Batchelder times the ammunition feeder on an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter machine gun. In 2003, Airman Batchelder suffered numerous injuries from flying shrapnel of a rocket that exploded in his tent in Baghdad. After five hand surgeries, he is back in Iraq with the 64th Helicopter Maintenance Unit.

By Senior Airman  
Shaun Emery  
*332nd Air Expeditionary  
Wing public affairs*

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq -- Although a rocket attack cut his time short on his first deployment, an Airman with the 64th Helicopter Maintenance Unit here pledged to himself he would endure whatever pain was necessary to get back in the fight.

Following a year-and-a-half recovery from serious injuries to his hand which could have ended his Air Force career, Senior Airman Douglas Batchelder, an armament systems journeyman, is back in Iraq.

In November 2003, he arrived at Baghdad International Airport to begin his first deployment. After a couple hours of inprocessing and a welcome nap, Airman Batchelder reported to duty. His four hours on station would be all he would see of his rotation.

“My commander had given me a handful of keys, and I stuck them in my pocket,” said Airman Batchelder, recalling the day’s events. “When I took them out of my pocket, some fell to the ground.”

The events that would follow still linger in Airman Batchelder’s mind. Just as he bent over to pick up the fallen keys, a 122-mm rocket tore through his tent, careened off his back, hit the ground and exploded.

“I blinked as the rocket exploded, so all I remember is a bright flash through my eyelids,” Airman Batchelder said.

The concussion ruptured his eardrums. He described the feeling as being enveloped in “silent chaos.” Pieces of debris were flying everywhere, and fire engulfed his tent.

Airman Batchelder suffered numerous shrapnel injuries, the most serious to his right hand. Pararescuemen on site quickly provided aid, and he was whisked away to the

hospital where fortune smiled on him.

“The doctor (who) saw me when I got to the hospital said he had also just arrived,” he said, “and as luck would have it, he was a hand surgeon.”

Airman Batchelder received his first surgery in Baghdad. He was brought to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, where he received his second surgery.

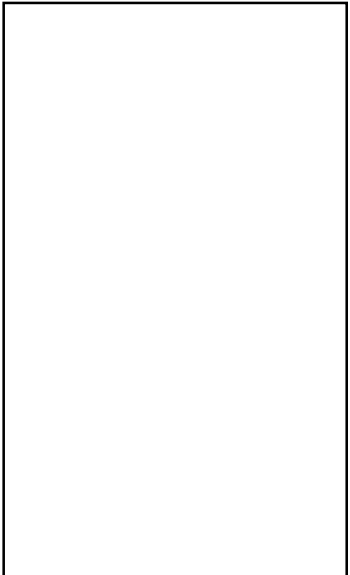
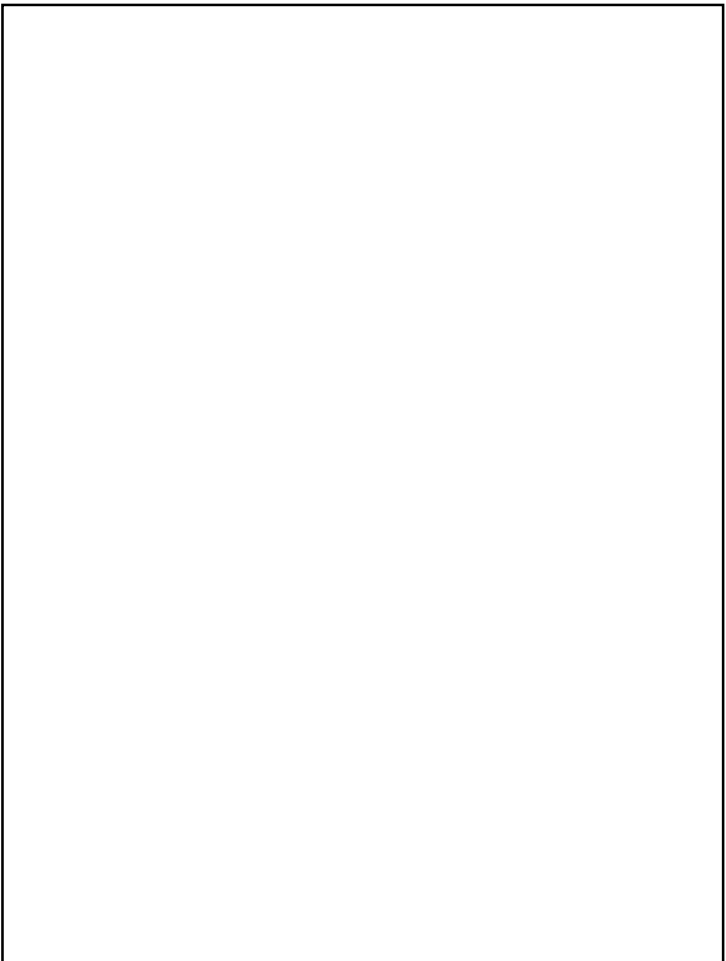
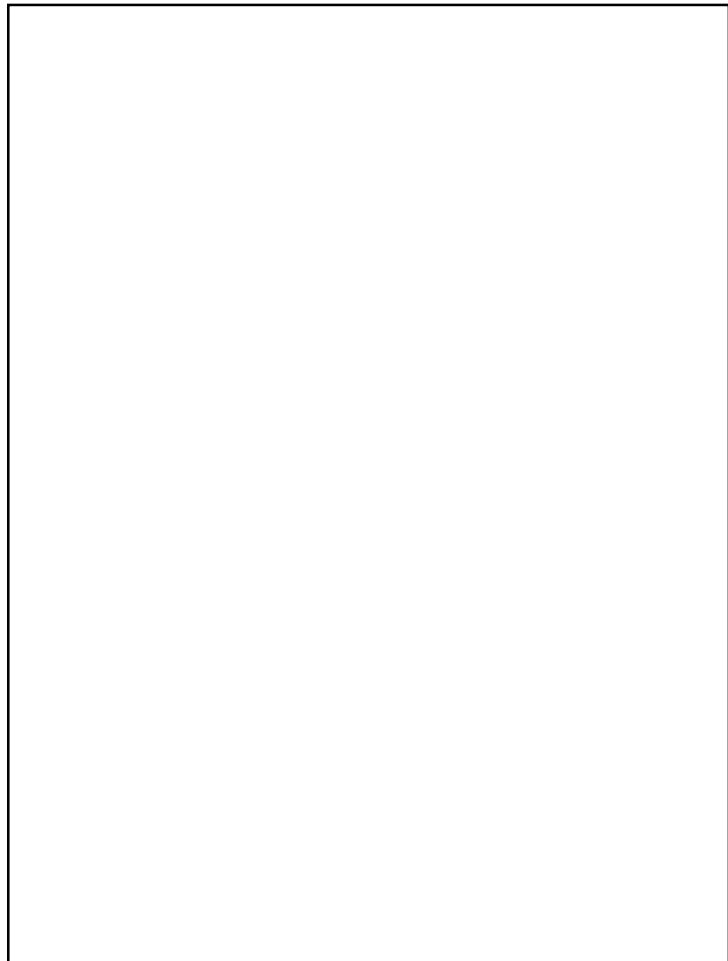
After returning to the United States, Airman Batchelder would have to make the decision that would ultimately shape his Air Force career -- separate from the Air Force or stay in. Airman Batchelder decided that getting out was not an option.

“I was too young to stop doing something that I really love,” he said. “The therapy was difficult, but I stayed positive because I wanted a chance to get back to the desert to do my job.”

Airman Batchelder has had five surgeries on his hand which has now 17 screws, metal plates and pins holding it together.

Airman Batchelder said he is excited to be back in Iraq contributing to the Air Force mission.

“I know my loved ones back home are concerned for me, but this was something I really wanted to do,” he said.



# Comm. prepares base network for AETC visit

**Compiled by the  
47th Communication Squadron  
Information Assurance Office  
staff**

Laughlin personnel are preparing for the biannual Information Assurance (IA) inspection. This is similar in magnitude to the ORI for personnel Laughlin, and it begins Aug. 16 when AETC inspectors arrive at Laughlin.

They will review the base Information Assurance Assessment Program (IAAP), affecting all users of computers, phones, or other communication devices.

The assessment will have two phases.

During Phase one, Aug. 16 to 18, inspectors will review the base Communication Security (COMSEC) program. Those units with COMSEC hold-

ings will have a one-on-one inspection with the AETC representative. The inspectors will verify records and inventories with the COMSEC program manager.

Phase two, Aug. 19 to 26, will directly affect all Laughlin personnel when inspectors check Laughlin's computer security and IA awareness. During this phase, inspectors will verify Laughlin's adherence to prescribed security policies. Random office checks will be conducted throughout the base.

To help your unit security manager prepare for this inspection, please ensure the following inspection items are followed:

- Ensure red stickers warning users that the device is subject to monitoring are on all telephones.
- Ensure a banner is displayed at logon

to warn the user that each computer is subject to monitoring.

- Do not write any passwords down.
- Lock or log off your computer when not at your workstation.
- Ensure all floppy disks/CDs are properly labeled to verify classification before use. (Inspectors have been known to give a user a CD/disk and ask the user to print something.)
- Do not allow any unauthorized individuals into controlled-access areas to include communication closets.
- Know who the following members of your unit are: IA manager, computer security officer, Client Support Administrator (formerly Workgroup Manager).

Personnel are responsible for protecting personal and government information. Inspectors often try to obtain

personal information and/or passwords by posing as a legitimate authority.

Several years ago an evaluation team at Laughlin sent out an e-mail posing as the wing commander demanding individuals send their passwords. The team prepared an impressive but phony document attempting to trick computer users to breach security. Remember, under no circumstances do network administrators ever need your network credentials (log on or password).

AETC inspectors will be here, and it is imperative for each user to prepare for the IAAP assessment.

The success of our base during the inspection will ultimately depend on each computer user.

For questions, call the wing IA office at 298-5081.



*Photo by Airman 1st Class Olufemi A. Owolabi*

## The gift of life...

**Fabian Fernandez of the South Texas Blood and Tissue Center applies a bandage to Senior Airman Gallardo Isaac, of the 47th Security Forces Squadron. Airman Fernandez is one of the base members who trooped out to donate during a blood drive here June 8.**

# Force Shaping Phase II evolves for fiscal year 2006

**By Master Sgt.  
Mitch Gettle  
*Air Force Print News***

The Air Force achieved its congressionally mandated active-duty end strength of 359,700 Airmen for fiscal 2005. The Air Force had exceeded that ceiling until now.

Force Shaping Phase II initiatives successfully reduced the overall size of the force.

However, the Air Force still has more officers than authorized and Phase II will continue into the next fiscal year, beginning Oct. 1.

"We will now limit voluntary separation opportunities for active-duty enlisted Airmen, while maintaining voluntary programs for officers," said Brig. Gen. Glenn F. Spears, force management policy director on the direc-

tor of personnel staff at the Pentagon.

"We met our goals to balance and reduce excesses in our enlisted force, and we must continue to focus on shaping the officer force in size and skills," he said.

Two force-shaping initiatives for the enlisted force will be retained: the "Blue to Green" option and the career job reservation program.

"Airmen who do not wish to obtain a CJR or do not want to retrain may apply to transfer to the Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard via Palace Chase, transfer to the Army via the Blue to Green program, apply for opportunities in civil service or separate upon fulfillment of their enlistment," General Spears said.

For Air Force officers, force-shaping opportunities are still available and will

continue until the Air Force meets its end strength numbers for 2006.

"We currently have more officers than allowed by law, particularly in the junior grades," General Spears said. "This excess produces operational and fiscal costs - it restricts their opportunities to serve and to develop as leaders in our force, and it takes dollars from other validated requirements."

"Therefore, we will continue to offer a variety of programs for these officers to voluntarily leave the Air Force. If there are insufficient volunteers, we will have to consider other options," General Spears added.

The latest force-shaping opportunities are now available on the Air Force Personnel Center Web site at [www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/retsep/shape2.htm](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/retsep/shape2.htm).

**Allowance**, from  
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the higher amount.

However, troops moving into that area receive the lower amount. Geographic rate protection was a temporary protection put into effect to prevent troops of the same pay grade living in the same area from getting different amounts of housing allowance.

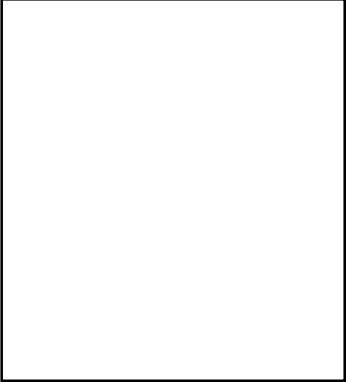
Rate protection was instituted in 2000 to ensure troops' BAH rates were the same among like-pay grade individuals living in the same area while troops were still paying part of their own housing expenses, Penrod explained. Now that BAH rates are high enough to cover servicemembers' entire housing expenses, geographic rate protection isn't necessary, she said.

"It was a short-term program," she said. "We always had in our minds that we would eliminate the protection once the out-of-pocket (expenses) went to zero."

Under the new BAH guidelines, a servicemember moving to a new area will receive the appropriate BAH rate for that area regardless of whether troops already living there are receiving a higher rate, she said.

"This change makes financial sense," Penrod said. "We're adjusting rates to where they should be."

Each year, BAH rates are adjusted with input from military housing offices in the area, Penrod said.



# Buckle up: Seconds can save lives

**By Senior Airman Amy Robinson**  
*Air Combat Command public affairs*

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. -- 1.5 seconds is all it takes.

Granted, for those who take their time, it may take about four seconds, but it is still roughly about the same amount of time it takes to turn the key and start the car.

People who take the extra couple of seconds to secure their seat belts can reduce their risk of injury or death, not only for themselves, but for others too.

So if it takes less than five seconds and it can save lives, why aren't Airmen buckling up?

"It gets a little frustrating," said Chief Master Sgt. Kevin Ennis, Air Combat Command safety directorate's ground safety chief. "It's difficult for me to believe that people don't know the benefits of buckling up."

During 2004, there were 14 vehicle-related fatalities within ACC, and in half of those fatalities, people were not wearing seat belts.

So far in 2005, there have been nine four-wheeled vehicle fatalities and one permanent disability. In

seven of those cases, seat belts were not worn.

Chief Ennis said maybe some Airmen do not buckle up because they think it just will not happen to them. In an effort to help dispel that belief, he pointed to Memorial Day weekend where ACC lost two Airmen in a single day.

The first accident occurred at about 3 a.m. and involved four Airmen from Shaw Air Force Base, S.C. Three of the four Airmen - everyone but the driver - walked away from the accident. The driver was the only one not wearing his seat belt.

Two hours later, two Airmen at Seymour Johnson

AFB, N.C., were involved in a car accident.

Again, the driver was not wearing his seat belt and died as a result of the accident. The passenger was wearing one and suffered only minor injuries.

While none of the passengers in these accidents died, the chief stressed that passengers are also at risk of injury or death if they choose not to wear their seat belts.

Chief Ennis referred to a case earlier this year where an Airman from Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, was riding in the back seat of a vehicle and suffered critical injuries in an accident. Because he was not wearing his

seat belt, the force of the accident threw him from the vehicle.

The accident left him in a coma and ultimately he was medically discharged from the Air Force.

"If you're not restrained in a vehicle, regardless of whether you're in the front or the back, you become a projectile," Chief Ennis said. "Even if you weren't ejected from the vehicle, can you imagine the force you would strike the front seat with?"

An unrestrained back-seat passenger involved in a car crash at 30 mph will fly into the front seats with a force that is 30 to 60 times the person's body weight, ac-

cording to the Lancashire Partnership for Road Safety, a multiagency partnership in the United Kingdom aimed at reducing the number of traffic casualties.

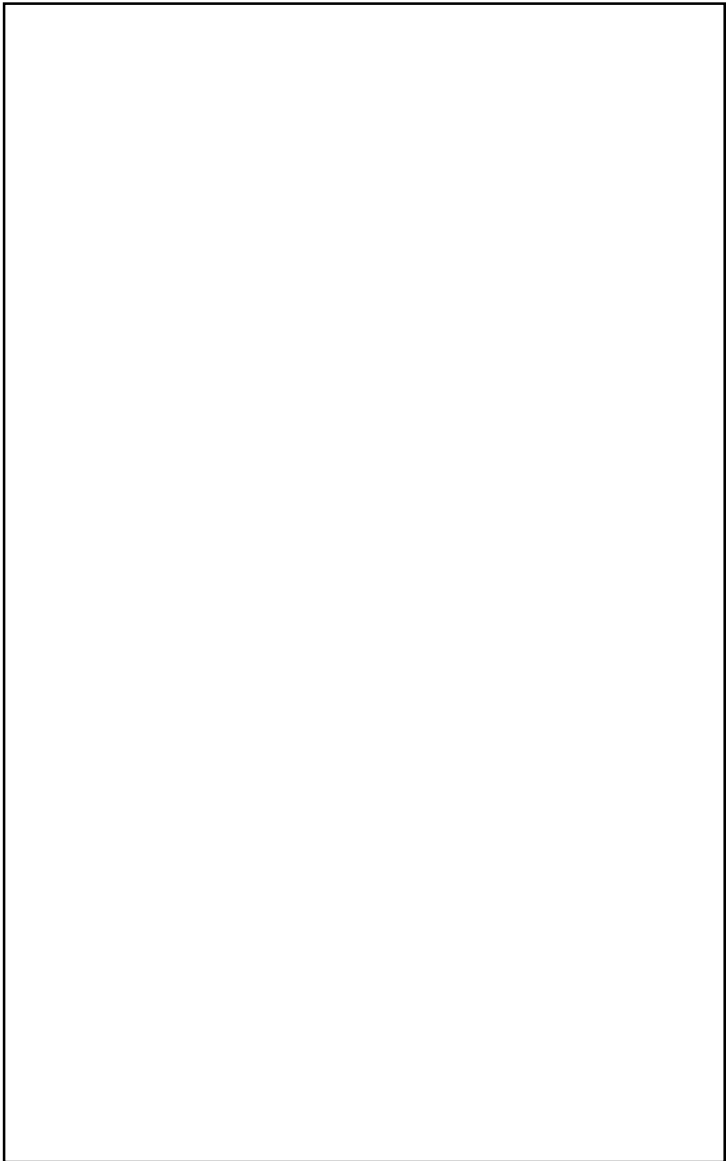
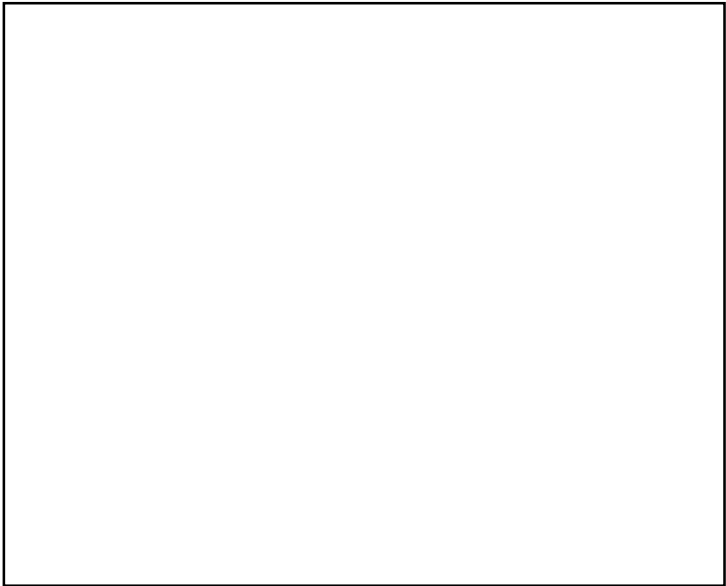
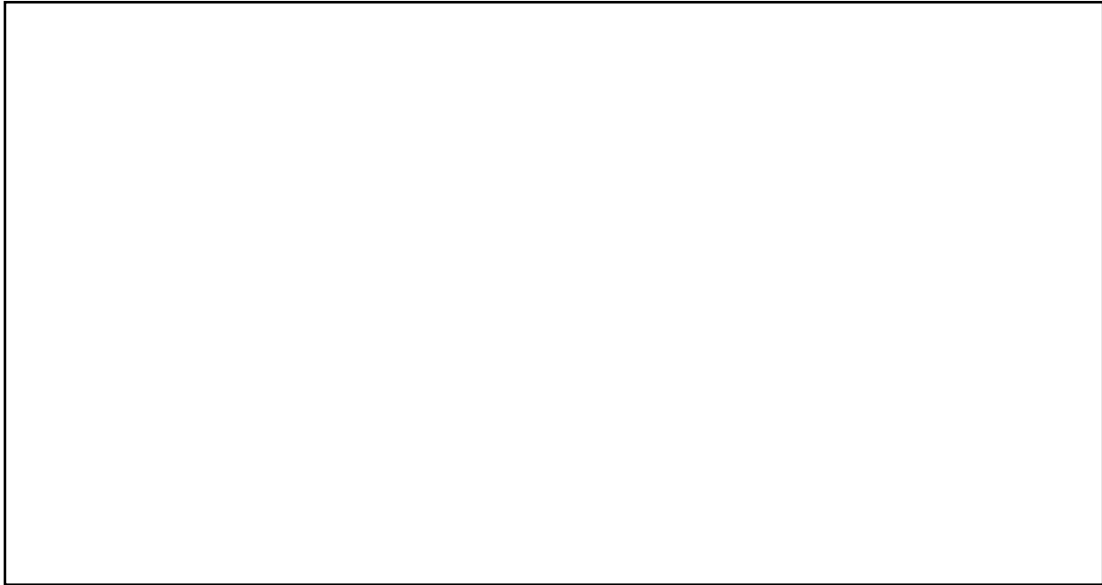
In fact, a study at the University at Buffalo, N.Y., refers to back-seat passengers as "back-seat bullets," that can slam into the driver, increasing not only the passengers', but also the driver's risk of death.

"I don't understand why the word's not sinking in - seat belts do save lives, and I certainly am an advocate," Chief Ennis said.

1.5 seconds - that is all.

So why aren't Airmen buckling up?

*(Courtesy Air Combat Command)*





## Base residents urged to complete housing survey

WASHINGTON -- An Air Force-wide base resident survey has been launched to determine the level of satisfaction of family housing residents at installations worldwide.

The survey provides base-housing residents and housing managers an opportunity to respond to survey questions regarding housing facilities and services delivered. At installations with privatized housing, property managers will also participate in the survey.

"We encourage all residents to complete their survey as soon as possible," said Maj. Gen. L. Dean Fox, the Air

Force Civil Engineer. "The more participants we have, the more accurate our results will be and the greater emphasis we can place on making the recommended changes."

Stateside residents should have received their surveys in June, while overseas residents should receive surveys by late summer or early fall, officials said.

The survey is customized for Air Force residents and will take about five minutes to complete.

"Efforts to assess resident satisfaction have historically been undertaken at the installation level," said Col. Bob

Griffin, Air Force Housing Division chief. "Using standardized surveys will allow us to make valid comparisons of the data collected. I encourage every Air Force family residing in government-owned or privatized housing to participate."

Each resident will be provided a pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope to return the survey.

Survey results are confidential and anonymous. The survey asks residents to respond to questions related to the physical property, services and management's performance. With the

cooperation and candid responses by residents, the Air Force can collect important information that will be used to identify areas where improvements are required.

An executive summary of the survey results will be provided to senior leaders at the wing, major command and Air Staff levels and used as a basis for decisions regarding the Air Force's Military Housing Privatization Initiative, military construction needs and the future of family housing.

*(Courtesy Air Force Print News Service)*

## Death benefits, insurance increase for servicemembers

**By Army Sgt. Sara Wood**  
*American Forces Press Service*

WASHINGTON -- Compensation for the survivors of servicemembers who die in combat zones and insurance coverage for servicemembers will both increase significantly this year.

An increase in death gratuity benefits from \$12,500 to \$100,000 already has taken effect, and Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance maximum coverage will increase to \$400,000 starting Sept. 1, said Col. Virginia Penrod, director of military compensation.

The increase in death benefits took effect May 11 and is dated retroactively to Oct. 7, 2001, Colonel Penrod said. This means that survivors of servicemembers who died between Oct. 7, 2001, and May 11, 2005, will receive the increased benefits, as will survivors of servicemembers who die from May 11 on, she said.

The increased benefits are for survivors of servicemembers who die in combat zones, combat operations and combat-related situations, she said. Combat-related situations include airborne duty, combat training, demolition duty and training exercises.

A policy designating combat areas and situations was

given to the individual services in June, and each service is now reviewing cases. Payments already have begun, but the process of identifying and paying eligible survivors could take several months, the colonel said.

When the increase in SGLI coverage takes effect Sept. 1, it also will be dated retroactively to Oct. 7, 2001. Survivors of servicemembers who died in a combat zone, combat operations or combat-related situations between the October date and Sept. 1 will receive \$150,000 in transitional insurance, which will bring them to \$400,000.

Besides the increased coverage, DOD will pay premiums of \$150,000 for servicemembers involved in combat operations or deployed to a combat zone.

The increase of these two benefits came about as a result of a 2004 study evaluating the adequacy of death benefits for servicemembers. The study found that benefits were adequate, but did not recognize the unique sacrifice made by servicemembers who die in combat situations, Colonel Penrod said.

"There was concern that we weren't recognizing direct sacrifice of life in service to our nation," she said. "That's how the increase was made for those particular situations."



*Photos by Airman 1st Class Olufemi A. Owolabi*

### Preparing to go back to school...

(Above) Kenneth Smith, Director of Operations at the San Antonio center of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, shows Senior Airmen Sean Mallery (in front), Rebekah Mallery and Lee Bruce, 47th Communications Squadron, the schedule of classes the school will offer at Laughlin in the Fall.

(Left) First Lt. Timothy Lucio and 2nd Lt. Aaron Gregory (far left), 47th Comptroller Squadron, view brochures and ask how they can take classes in one of more 20 colleges attending the Education Fair July 8 at the Fiesta Center.



# With a will, there's always a weigh

By Senior Airman  
Stacia Zachary  
43rd Airlift Wing public affairs

POPE AIR FORCE BASE, N.C.-- With the prospect of being kicked out of the Air Force for failing to meet fitness standards, Senior Airman Brian Graack, of the 43rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron here, was forced with a tough decision: shape up or ship out.

With five failed fitness tests looming in his past and with scores averaging between 30 to 40 points - a poor rating - Airman Graack had more than just a little work to do if he wanted to remain in the Air Force. With his current weight issues and inability to meet the new fitness benchmark, Airman Graack had six weeks of preparation before his sixth and final test. He needed to score a marginal rating - more than 70 points - to stay in the Air Force.

"It finally dawned on me that this was it, and if I didn't pass the fitness test and got kicked out, I had no backup plan on how I was going to support my wife and baby daughter," he said. "I decided I needed to do whatever it took to stay in the Air Force."

With help from his wife, Angela, co-workers and a strict fitness and nutrition regimen, Airman Graack set off to lose weight, get in shape and pass the fit test.

While weight gain can be gradual

and not altogether noticeable until an excess amount has been packed on, many can relate to Airman Graack's recent struggle with weight.

"I was a wrestler in high school, and I really never struggled with weight issues until my wife got pregnant with our daughter," he said. "I guess you could say I went pound for pound with her while she was pregnant, and I never got back in shape after my daughter's birth. No excuse, really."

With the excuses out of the way and a game plan in motion, Airman Graack was determined to work out twice a day and break his habit of drinking sodas by replacing all fluids with water only.

His wife was in charge of the diet while Airman Graack's friend, Senior Airman Trent Blair, of the 43rd Operations Group, helped motivate him on the running track.

"My wife was my rock," he said. "She cleaned the house out of all things tempting to eat and made healthy meals for lunch and dinner. I mostly ate fruits and vegetables, some red meat and a lot of chicken. All fast food and fried foods were off-limits to me."

With healthy, low-fat foods filling up his breakfast, lunch and dinner hours, Airman Graack's other focus was centered on exercise.

"I (exercised) twice a day, and I took mock fitness tests one to two times a

week," he said. "At nights, Trent would run with me on a 3-mile route past (a local college). Little by little, the runs got easier."

With six weeks of preparation up, Airman Graack was poised to take his test. Forty-five pounds leaner, he finally passed his test with a 71, nearly 40 points higher than less than a month before.

Not only has he shed the weight, but Airman Graack said he has also shed the lack of confidence he had about both himself and his place in the Air Force.

"I feel better about myself," he said. "My attitude has changed so much, and I am more focused and better able to do my job. It's amazing what weight can do to a person's self-esteem."

With Airman Graack's position now secure, he has time to focus on the Air Force mission. Throughout his struggle to get fit, his squadron's Airmen have applauded his efforts.

"This recent physical fitness strife has had a positive rather than negative effect on (Airman) Graack," said Staff Sgt. Richard Bullard, 43rd AMXS tool journeyman and the Airman Graack's supervisor. "While I provided motivation and allotted him additional time for training, it was ultimately his drive to stay in the Air Force that made him successful."

While the burden was Airman Graack's to bear, he did not do it alone,

nor did he accomplish it without Air Force notice. His ability to meet his goal left a lasting impression on those he works with.

"I am only going to get better, and next time around I plan on scoring an excellent (on the test)," Airman Graack said.



Photo by Senior Airman Stacia Zachary  
**Senior Airman Brian Graack shows off a picture of himself a short time before he got the ultimatum to lose weight and get in shape or get out of the Air Force.**



Photo by Airman 1st Class Olufemi A. Owolabi

## XLER

**1st Lt. Timothy Lucio**  
47th Comptroller Squadron

**Hometown:** Palacios, Texas  
**Family:** Wife, Christine; son, Ethan and daughter, Elisabeth  
**Time at Laughlin:** 1 year and 8 months  
**Time in service:** Two years  
**Greatest accomplishment:** Getting my degree and my commission, both are firsts

in my family.  
**Hobbies:** Reading and watching television  
**Bad habit:** Procrastination  
**Favorite movies:** "Tombstone," "Gladiator," and "The Patriot"  
**If you could spend one hour with any person, who would it be and why?** My wife because she is my best friend.

**"First Lt. Tim Lucio takes the initiative and tackles our toughest jobs... focused on the warfighter, 24 and 7."**  
  
- Maj. Michael Griener,  
47th Comptroller Squadron commander

# WWII vet shares history, wisdom, continues service to his country

By Master Sgt. Anthony Hill  
Public affairs

Thurman Carroll has spent more than half a century serving his country.

It was in 1942 when then 17-year-old Carroll quit school and joined the U.S. Army. As his high school class in Lee's Summit, Missouri, was graduating, he was on the front lines fighting in World War II.

"I joined for patriotic reasons and love of my country, and because the United States was at war," he said. "I didn't know what it was all about, but I knew that I wanted to be out there fighting."

Today, at the age of 79, he works in Laughlin's maintenance directorate in the corrosion control division. He currently assists and trains the new hazardous waste material handlers within the section. A 29-year veteran of the U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force, Mr. Carroll recently received the 30-year pin for civil service, and for that he said the recognition is appreciated.

As this year marks the 60th anniversary of the end of WWII, ceremonies are being held throughout America and in various other countries to commemorate Victory-in-Europe and Victory-in-Japan days.

Mr. Carroll recalled how President Franklin Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill worked together to take on Nazi Germany during the war. He reminisced how American General George Patton and British General Bernard Montgomery led the fight under General Dwight Eisenhower, and he recalled when troops headed out for the final campaign that led to Hitler's demise and the end of the war.

As a young Soldier during the war, Carroll fought from the beaches in Normandy, France, to Germany. He was an ammunition carrier and drove a

half track, "something like a mixture of a tank and truck that could go through all terrain," he said.

As he fought, he just hoped to live from day to day and trusted in God that he would make it each day. But one day at Brest, France, he was working as a tank cannonier during barrage fire. He was loading shells into the cannon when enemy fire hit his open-turret tank. Shrapnel tore through his upper left arm.

"My gunner said 'come on, get another round in there,'" he recalled.

"I said, 'I don't know what's happening, but I can't get my arm in right.'"

"He said, 'you've been wounded.' "So, I said, 'I can't do my job, I can't move my arm.'"

They helped him out of the tank, gave him morphine and rushed him to the hospital.

"After they got me well, they put me back in the line, and I fought across the Rhine River into the center of Germany," he said.

After three years in the Army, Mr. Carroll decided that was enough. He left the service, but then later joined the Navy.

"I wanted to know what it was like to have a bed to sleep in and not a fox hole with snow and ice," he said.

As a Navy Reservist on active duty at Naval Air Station, Olathe, Kan., he worked in the fire department, and carpenter and paint shops. He also worked in the motor pool and supervised Marines.

Following nine years in the Navy, Mr. Carroll felt he wasn't spending enough time with his wife, Amy, whom he met during his first duty assignment in England prior to fighting on the war's front lines.

Since she couldn't be with him on the naval air station, he left the Navy and joined the Air Force.

While in the Air Force, Mr. Carroll took a general educational development test and earned the equivalency of a high school education. The Air Force then sent him to college at Missouri University to study corrosion and learn what the problem was with missiles corroding in silos under the ground. When he returned from college, he became an instructor.

"The Air Force needed corrosion-control instructors at the time because missiles were corroding, and they needed people to teach it," he said.

He traveled to bases to teach Airmen and found that civil engineers were being tasked to learn how to deal with the missile corrosion-control problem.

"We could teach them but couldn't make them learn," he said.

He met with a board of officers and made the recommendation to create a corrosion-control career field because the civil engineer Airmen weren't interested in corrosion control. A new career field would let people advance in rank, get interested and learn it, he said.

After 17 years in the Air Force, Mr. Carroll retired as a master sergeant. He ended his active-duty service at Laughlin in 1973, working in civil engineering as a painter and in charge of paint contracts.

Throughout his mili-



**Thurman Carroll, affectionately referred to as "Sarge" in Laughlin's corrosion control division, received four battle stars and a purple heart during World War II.**

tary tours, he said he enjoyed them all and each military service had its own flavor.

"When I went into the Army eating good food and had never been out of my hometown, I thought I was in paradise," he said. "If I had never joined the military, I would have probably still been in Missouri. I've gotten a wonderful education and made friends from traveling all over the world."

Raising his family and providing his children with a good education is probably the achievement he's proudest of.

Being raised during the depression, Mr. Carroll said he appreciated what he had because his family didn't have much. And he's passed on his family values by being a living example to his two children, three grandchildren and one great grandson.

When it comes to serving his country, Mr. Carroll said, "With my experience, I help train other people to help protect our country today and pass knowledge on. We're the best country in the world. I've been all over, and I wouldn't trade America for any country I've ever been in."

As he offers words of wisdom to the men and women serving in today's armed forces, he says to "Trust in God and have your faith well-founded."

"People's prayers and God Almighty is the reason I'm alive today. I prayed (too)," he said. "When the mortars are coming in and you see your buddies get their heads blown off and they're dead all over, you're going to talk to the Lord."



Photos by Billy McDonald

**Britten Gambrel (right), Laughlin's component maintenance division chief, presents Mr. Carroll with a certificate honoring him for 30 years of civil service.**





photo by Master Sgt. Ruby Zarzyczny

### Give ‘em a ‘brake’...

PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, Ore.-- Staff Sgts. Matt Stark (left) and Geoffrey Corey change a brake on a KC-135 Stratotanker here. The aircraft’s primary mission is air refueling. The Airmen are assigned to the 939th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

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# Training foreign forces in Air Force special ops

**By Capt. Tom Montgomery**  
*Air Force Special Operations  
Command Public affairs*

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla. — The 6th Special Operations Squadron here is the only unit in the U.S. military with a wartime mission to assess, train, advise and assist foreign aviation forces. The squadron's Airmen are constantly operating in the most dangerous corners of the world where terrorists, warlords and criminals thrive.

The 6th SOS air commandos train foreign allies to use and sustain air power in these environments.

"Our ability to train and advise foreign aviation forces has more long-term, strategic relevance in the war on terrorism and insurgency than direct tactical actions by United States forces," said Jerry Klingaman, squadron director of strategy and plans. "We offer a strategy of military enablement, and that's crucial to our current national security posture."

The 6th SOS prepares for this task with advanced training. Upon acceptance to the squadron, it takes an Airman nearly a year of training to become mission qualified.

The unit teaches foreign forces to maintain, fly and fight in myriad aircraft. Some aircraft they are proficient in are Russian and have wording on gauges that are Cyrillic.

Equally important, the squadron's Airmen have annual language training. Training also includes advanced weapons skills and instruction covering regional and political issues.

The post-Cold War world has made it imperative for the United States to develop overseas partnerships and realign its forces to meet emerging threats. The U.S. will also need to rely more on the ability of allies to defend themselves and assist in fighting terrorists.

U.S. Special Operations Command has been tasked as the lead command for planning the war on terrorism. As such, Air Force Special Operations Command is the air component for this challenge and is

developing more capabilities to accomplish these missions. There is recent guidance to significantly increase the size of the 6th SOS which currently has more than 30 Air Force job specialties represented in a unit comprising about 100 Airmen.

The squadron's Airmen recently returned from a mission in North Africa where they taught improved and specialized tactics and techniques. The training these air forces receive is critical to keep their ground forces resupplied and combat ready.

As terrorist groups, bandits, and rebels have exploited the region as a safe haven, North Africa presents a serious challenge for the Airmen. The Sahara and Pan Sahel regions span across an area as large as the continental U.S. where human existence is barely possible with 130-degree temperatures and bone-dry deserts. It is the perfect place for a terrorist to hide, and the hardest place for less-developed governments to find and engage the enemy.

"It's not easy to keep the ground troops resupplied via convoy vehicles in the region because if the bandits or land mines don't get you, the heat will. So, we teach them to use air power," said a mission commander. Special operations Airmen's names are not released for security reasons.

"When we got the pilots ready and they began to fly supplies into austere landing strips, we were heroes to their army guys," the colonel said. "And, when it came time to leave the country, the government wanted us to stay."

The squadron is aligned to accomplish its mission worldwide, and Airmen are assigned to a flight where their regional and language abilities will be useful.

The Southern Command flight recently conducted training in Colombia that resulted in the Colombian military being able to conduct joint insertion and extraction missions with night-vision goggles.

"For Colombia, our efforts resulted in the first-ever use of NVG capability in a joint combat search



*U.S. Air Force photo*

**PHILIPPINES -- Airmen of the 6th Special Operations Squadron from Hurlburt Field, Fla., train Philippine airmen to use a rope ladder.**

and rescue operation," said a mission commander there.

"Narcotics and terrorism go hand-in-hand," Mr. Klingaman said. "And Colombia remains a hotbed for this activity. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia have been at war with the Colombian government for decades, funding their insurgency through extortion, kidnapping and narcotics sales."

The squadron also operates in another hotbed for terrorism. South-east Asia has emerged as a haven for radical Islamic terrorist groups like al Qaeda. The Philippine government has been fighting against numerous such groups.

Special operations Airmen recently trained Philippine airmen as quick-reaction combat lifesavers. The team from the 6th SOS included pilots, maintainers, security forces, pararescuemen and medics trained as

international health specialists.

"Before our mobile training team arrived, the Philippine air force had the ability to take off and land during the day. After our training, they were able to conduct multiple aircraft, multiple formation infiltration and exfiltration missions at night on NVGs with gunnery and with combat lifesavers rappelling and fast-roping out to save lives," said a 6th SOS major who was a mission commander.

These internationally savvy warrior-teachers continue to operate worldwide, allowing friendly forces to bring air and space power to the fight. Their unique mission and training make them a key component to the capability to fight terrorists on foreign soil. As this mission grows, leaders have also expressed their desire to grow this squadron of air commandos.



## 47th MDG hosts sports- physical clinic

The 47th Medical Group pediatric clinic will be hosting a sports-physical clinic from 9 a.m. to noon Aug. 6. A makeup session will be held Aug. 10 from 3:30 to 5:30p.m.

Prior to the appointment, parents should obtain physical-examination forms from their respective schools and complete any demographic/history information.

Call the appointment line at 298-6333 to schedule physical examination.

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